

## [54] METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING HELP INFORMATION TO USERS OF COMPUTERS

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## Related U.S. Application Data

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[58] Field of Search ..... 395/159, 157, 155, 156, 395/161, 144; 340/721

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## [57] ABSTRACT

A method for presenting help messages to a user in an interactive computer environment in which a help mode operates concurrently with other programs operating in the computer system. The user receives information about an icon by positioning a pointer on the computer's video display over the icon about which more information is desired. The computer then retrieves an appropriate help message based upon user sophistication from a database of help messages stored in its memory and displays it in a graphic bubble on the video display. The graphic bubble is placed so as to not overlap the object about which more help is requested. The graphic bubble is removed as soon as the pointer is moved away from the object.

18 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets

